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Balajura Walks

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Ballajura¹ Walks

Joyce Parkes (Ballajura, Western Australia)

Walking north along Bellefin Drive is seeing
plane trees planted on the east side, eucalyptus
marginata and xanthorrhoeas² replanted on
the west side of this road leading to Hepburn

Avenue, winding just south of a biologically
intact stretch of homeland called Cullacabardee³
where, at Baal Street, a small Nyungar community
(Nyungah, the Last of the River People) dwells

apart from yet is a part of other storytellers,
walkers, painters, poets living close to the coast,
the city, the foothills. Made to transport country
and coastal-plain dwellers west towards

the Indian Ocean, east towards the Darling Ranges,
Hepburn Avenue seems to ask if scarps, plains,
trees – texts, tenets, themes – are colleagues
and kin and kindreds of land and sea.

¹ Ballajura is the name of a place on the Isle of Man and the name Ernest Kerruish gave to the land he purchased for a farm near Perth, Western Australia, on arriving from the Isle of Man in 1905 – in what is now known as the suburb of Ballajura. Thanks to my former neighbour, Vanya Chatley, for supplying the history.

² Xanthorrhoea, any plant of the genus xanthorrhoea, also known as the grass tree, and native to Western Australia.

³ Meeting Place.